An Investigation of the Relationship between Job Stress and Job Interests in Kharazmi University Personnel

Shahnaz Mohammadi, PhD
Department of Clinical Psychology
Kharazmi University

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between job stress and job interests among Kharazmi University personnel. The sample consisted of 100 female and 100 male employees who were selected through a simple random sampling method from the employees of Kharazmi University at Karaj campus. The participants responded to two questionnaires i.e., Job Stress Inventory (Rice, 1992), and Job Interests Inventory (Holland, 1987). The results indicated significant correlations between the overall job stress and job interests (activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment), interpersonal relations and job interests, and physical condition and job interests. Moreover, there were significant differences between the female and male employees regarding the variables studied in this work but no difference was observed between single and married employees.

Keywords: job stress, job interests

In a process of rapid changes which happen in social life, these days we experience higher degrees of stress compared to the past. Job stress is an important issue in human societies which may result in serious physical and mental illnesses (Alessandro, 2006; Carsten, 2006; Aghilinezhad; 2008). Job stress is the interaction between employee individual characteristics and the working conditions in a way that job demands of the workplace is more than what the employee can afford to cope. This definition deals with reduction of personnel relation with job environment. (Bazargan, 2004; Etemadi, 2004). Experiencing job stress may create negative consequences for employees and organization. Job health, job
satisfaction and organizational commitment depend on reducing stress (Seward, 2004; Gardner, 2005; Sarmad, 2006; Rezaeean, 2007; Sandeep, 2010). Organizations which provide stress management programs create an opportunity for their employees to acquire requirements to be more effective in their jobs. The type of job stress, according to different job environments can be different. In educational environments due to their special conditions there are certain stresses (Osarime Abbe, 2008).

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in the USA states 25% of employees believe that their job is the main source of stress in their lives and their job related problems cause more physical health problems for them compared to other stresses in life (Alessandro, 2006). Furthermore, about 28% of employees experience a high level of job stress and feel emotionally decomposed. Negative reaction of people to job stress also influences their performances at work.

Stress at work is also crucial for employers since it can result in decreases in productivity, motivation, and skills and increases in mistakes and accidents. High job stress is related to job abandonment and behaviors such as drug and alcohol abuse which result in decrease in production (Doyle, 2003). Job stress can be regarded as dangerous physical and emotional responses which are usually emitted when job requirements do not match with one’s interests (Schaufeli, Nachreiner, & Demerouti, 2003).

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in the USA announced that the number of employees who became sick because of stress has quadrupled from 1996 to 2000 (Gardner, 2005). Moreover, in the United States about one million employees become sick because of stress every day, and the cost of losing income because of absence, medical expenses, and losing profit is about 100 to 200 million dollars every year. The International Labour Organization also estimates that the costs incurred over the countries due to job stress is about 1-3.5% of GDP.
which are already on the rise (Soori, Rahimi, & Mohseni, 2006; Zare, Abedi, Halvani, Barkhoudari, & Aminpour, 2009).

People have different responses and reactions toward job stress which have been investigated as symptoms, reactions, consequences, or effects of job stress in different textbooks. Many researchers believe that job distress (Maslash & Jackson, 1981; Nelson, Darwin, Gary, Low & Kaye, Nelson, 2005; Garrosa et al., 2010) job dissatisfaction (Cooper & Cartwright, 1996; Russel, Altmaier, & van Velzen, 1998), and depression (Ley, 1994; Wood & Wood, 1993; Millward, 2005; Falkum & Vaglum, 2005; Teasdal, 2006; Hansen et al., 2009; Azman, 2010), are among the most frequent consequences and effects of job stress. In any case, investigations related to job stress show that it has negative effects on physical health (Falk, Hanson, Isaacs, & Ostergren, 1992; Siegrist, Peter, Motz, & Strauer, 1992; Spector, 2000; Jakson & Rothmand, 2006; Benzer, Young, Stolzmann, Osatuke, Metroko, Caso, White, & Mohr, 2011) and job performance (Cooper, 2000; Cooper & Cartwright, 1996; Spector, 2000); therefore, it imposes heavy costs on individuals and the society. Mostert, Rothmann, Mostert, & Nell (2008) by doing research on university faculty members found that all indicators related to job stress, including communication with coworkers, job control, job characteristics and workload have a significant relationship with negative physical health status. That is why it is important and necessary to intervene for stresses, especially for the job stress.

Hansen, Sverke, Swall (2009) believe that job stress can be caused by differences in individual needs with working environment requirements. People usually look for environments suitable for their skills and abilities in which to show their capabilities and values and take responsibilities accordingly. One’s interests and aptitudes in a particular area guarantees their progress in that area. The more one’s interests, or reactions with acceptance and aptitude, in a subject is, the more their progress in that area will be. On the other hand, if one does not have enough aptitudes or if
their reaction is with non-acceptance and disinterestedness, the possibilities of their success is very low (Haji Sadeghi, 2006). Selecting a right profession needs self-awareness and also professional opportunities provided by society (Kuram & Uygulama, 2009).

Interests are mental processes which create feelings (positive or negative) and provoke a desire to continue (or discontinue) similar thoughts or behavior. According to Claparede (1924), interest or delight is a basic factor which allows the person to actualize his/her talents. Famous philosophers like Rousseau and great educators like Montessori and Decroly were among the first people who pointed to the importance of interests.

Interest plays a very important role in one’s professional advancement and exploration of his/her inner tendency. Therefore, to guarantee psychological health and promote the saying “prevention is better than cure”, selection based on the individual’s ability and interest and guiding people to right directions are very important and bound us to acquire scientific information through scientific research. Many studies have been conducted on this subject some of which are Armstrong, Rounds, and Hubert (2008), Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2005), Lent (2008), Ralston, Borgen, Rottinghaus, and Donnay (2004), Rottinghaus, Gaffey, Borgen, and Ralston (2006). Job relish is the basis of career path interventions that its main aim is to find the most suitable job for a person with unique features (Tracey & Sodano, 2008). In other words, assessment of job relish is the cornerstone of a career path assessment (Greenhaus, Callanan, Board, Betz, Hall, & Inkson, 2006).

According to Holland, both the structure of job perceptions and job interests of individuals are based on an organized hexagonal model which facilitates people’s attempts to find jobs that are consistent with their interests (Holland, 1996, mentioned in Deng, Armstrong, & Rounds, 2007).
In Holland’s theory, there is a direct relation between personality and situational context. Personality is explained through career interests and activities. Job situation is explained through the people who work in that situation, demands related to their personality types, and the activities they prefer (Armstrong, Rounds, & Hubert, 2008). Holland’s theory has also influenced the extent of interests and can be used in categorizing jobs and work situations. This type of personality is regulated in a circular order in a way that the distance between different personalities reflects the degree of similarity among types so that the maximum similarity exists between those types situations in adjacent sides while the minimum similarity exists between those situations in opposite corners (Armstrong, Rounds, & Hubert, 2008). Progress in professional constancy and satisfaction depends on consistency between personality and the situation in which the person works (Holland, translated by Hoseinian and Yazdi, 1997). According to Holland, such an agreement results in selecting a more appropriate job, progress in job, more emotional and psychological constancy in activity, and more creativity and growth of individual characteristics. On the other hand, lack of constancy between situation and the type of personality results in dissatisfaction, job change, lack of success, and emotional and psychological inconsistency (Shafii Abadi, 2005).

Therefore, the question is that how can job stress influence personal performance and if a person is disinterested in his/her job, would he/she feel more level of job stress or if the person does his/her job with interest, according to personality characteristics and job interest would he/she feel less level of job stress? Since only limited research has been carried out on this topic in Iran it seems essential to address this issue. The present study focuses on this topic. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between job stress and job interests among university employees. It seeks to investigate the degree of the job stress (interpersonal relations, physical conditions, and job interest) in relation to
the job interest (activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment). The hypotheses are:

1. There is a relationship between (overall) job stress and job interest (activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment) of employees.
2. There is a relationship between job stress (interpersonal relations, physical conditions, and job interest) and job interest of employees.
3. There is a difference between male and female staff in the studied parameters (job stress and job interest variables).

Method

Statistical Population and Sampling Procedure

The statistical population of this study was all the employees of the Kharazmi University at Karaj campus. According to the population size and based on Kukran formula:

\[
S = \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{d^2}} \frac{N}{1 + \frac{1}{N} \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{d^2} - 1}
\]

(Sarmad, Bazargan, & Hejazi, 2007) and also by considering \(\alpha = 0.01\) (confidence level 0.99), the sample size was calculated \((n=200)\). Two-hundred employees (100 males, 100 females) were selected from the employees in the Kharazmi University, Karaj Campus through the process of simple random sampling.

Research Instruments

Job stress inventory (Philip Rice, 1992). Rice’s Job Stress Inventory contains 57 items and provides information about job stress. This inventory was translated and standardized by Hatami (1998). This questionnaire contains three sub-scales of interpersonal relations, physical conditions, and job interests. The first part of the questionnaire measures existing problems in interpersonal relations and job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Then, physical conditions which cause daily fatigue are
evaluated. The third part of the questionnaire is devoted to job interests. There is no time limit in answering the questionnaire but most of the respondents complete it in 30 minutes. Scoring is done in a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (most of the time). The score of job stress is calculated by adding the scores of all items. Hatami (1998) calculated the reliability and validity of this questionnaire on a sample of 275 school teachers. The reliability of this questionnaire was .89 (Cronback alpha) and the validity for the whole questionnaire and its three sub-scales of interpersonal relations, physical conditions, and job interests were .92, .89, .88, and .88, respectively (Behzadi, 2005). Hatami (1998) also gathered data from 30 female employees who referred to a counseling clinic in Iran’s Broadcasting Center and found that the level of job stress among the female employees was higher than the norm reported by Rice (1992).

The NormalExternal Sample Job Stress, Rice (1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low job stress</th>
<th>Normal job stress</th>
<th>Job stress</th>
<th>High job stress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>39-46</td>
<td>51-57</td>
<td>62-75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>48-55</td>
<td>58-67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>13-17</td>
<td>21-28</td>
<td>23-27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>91-111</td>
<td>117-134</td>
<td>141-167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reliability coefficients of this questionnaire in the present study for the three sub-scales of interpersonal relations, physical condition, and job interests based on Cronback alpha formula were found to be .75, .74, .91, and .90, respectively.

*Job Interests Inventory (Holland, 1987).* Holland developed a Self Directed Search (SDS) questionnaire based on his theory. He categorized people in six personal types of realist, search oriented, artistic, social, traditional and intrepid. This questionnaire contains 228 questions 66 of which are about
activities that have 6 scales with 11 questions for each scale. Moreover, another 66 questions are used to assess competencies. Jobs are assessed by 6 scales each with 14 questions. Self-estimates are based on two categories of 6 scaling. The reliability of this questionnaire is between .59 and .92 for different sub-scales and between .84 and .92 for all of the scales. Concurrent validity of the test is between .14 and .54.

Also Taghizadeh (1999) prepared a short form of the Holland’s education-career test for the first year high school students in Qom province, and obtained significant and high correlation coefficients of .001 between the original form and the short form. The range of test reliability was from .74 to .92 with validity range of .61 to .83 at .001 level of significance. The reliability coefficients of this test in the present study for the four sub-scales of activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment were .57, .75, .50, .52, and .74 respectively.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics like frequency, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlation (correlation matrix) was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to compare frequencies, mean, variance, and standard deviation in female and male employees. Pearson correlation coefficient (correlation matrix) was used to investigate the relationship between job stress and job interests in female and male employees. All the calculations were done with SPSS (α = .05).

Results

Table 1 shows the results of descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation related to the variables of the present study: job stress (interpersonal relations, physical conditions, and job interests) and job interests (activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment).

Table 1
### Descriptive Statistics of the Variables for Male & Female Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (overall)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>140.82</td>
<td>34.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>141.95</td>
<td>25.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>141.38</td>
<td>29.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (interpersonal relations)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>56.85</td>
<td>13.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>58.73</td>
<td>10.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>57.70</td>
<td>11.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (physical condition)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>17.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>48.88</td>
<td>14.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>48.94</td>
<td>15.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (job interest)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>34.97</td>
<td>13.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>34.34</td>
<td>7.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>34.65</td>
<td>10.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interest (overall)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>162.98</td>
<td>25.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>163.75</td>
<td>22.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>163.36</td>
<td>23.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interest (activities)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33.12</td>
<td>33.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33.20</td>
<td>33.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>33.16</td>
<td>33.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interest (experiences)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>60.54</td>
<td>10.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>31.55</td>
<td>10.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>30.04</td>
<td>10.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interest (jobs)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33.23</td>
<td>5.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33.63</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>33.43</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interest (self-assessment)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33.09</td>
<td>12.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>65.37</td>
<td>11.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>65.73</td>
<td>11.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the variables of the study were measured in interval scale, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to calculate the relationship between the variables and also to examine the research hypotheses. Table 2 shows the correlation matrix related to the variables under study.

**Hypothesis 1**

*There is a relationship between (overall) job stress and job interest (activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment) of employees.* According to Table 2, there is a positive correlation between (overall) job stress and job interest (activities) of the employees which is significant at .01; there is a positive correlation between (overall) job stress and job interest (experiences) of the employees which is significant at .01; there is a positive correlation between (overall) job stress and job interest (jobs) of the employees which is significant at .01; but there is no statistically significant relationship between (overall) job stress and job interest (self-assessment) of the employees.

**Hypothesis 2**

*There is a relationship between job stress (interpersonal relations, physical conditions, and job interest) and job interest of employees.* According to Table 2, there is a positive correlation between job stress (interpersonal relations) and job interest of the employees which is significant at.01; there is a positive correlation between job stress (physical condition) and job interest of the employees which is significant at.05; and there is a positive correlation between job stress (job interest) and job interest of the employees which is significant at.01.
### Table 2.
**Correlation Matrix Related to the Variables for Male & Female Employees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Job Stress (overall)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Job Stress interpersonal relations</td>
<td></td>
<td>.764**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Job Stress (physical condition)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.891**</td>
<td>.492**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Job Stress (job interest)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.729**</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>.541</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Job Interest (overall)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.285**</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.171*</td>
<td>.256**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Job Interest (activities)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.278**</td>
<td>.321</td>
<td>.142*</td>
<td>.241**</td>
<td>.718**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Job Interest (experiences)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.243**</td>
<td>.203</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>.744**</td>
<td>.659**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Job Interest (jobs)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.236**</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.246**</td>
<td>.621**</td>
<td>.248**</td>
<td>.301**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Job Interest (self-assessment)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.645**</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.418**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05     ** p<0.01

### Hypothesis 3

There are differences between single and married employees regarding the variables of job stress and job interests. Table 3 shows the difference between single and married employees regarding the variables of job stress and job interests. According to Table 3, since the observed $t$ is smaller than the critical $t$ value, there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding these variables.
Table 3
Descriptive Indicators Based on Marital Status and Results of the Independent T Test for Male & Female Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress</td>
<td>single</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>144.62</td>
<td>30.98</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>married</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>141.10</td>
<td>30.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interests</td>
<td>single</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>167.43</td>
<td>16.86</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>married</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>162.44</td>
<td>25.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 4
There is a difference between male and female staffs regarding the variables of job stress and job interests. Table 3 shows the difference between female and male staffs regarding the variables of job stress and job interests.

Table 4
Differences between Male and Female Staffs Regarding the Variables of Job Stress and Job Interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>155.91</td>
<td>25.484</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101.82</td>
<td>34.401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Interests</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>163.75</td>
<td>22.35</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>162.98</td>
<td>25.42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 4, since the observed t is greater than the critical t value (2.32), there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the job stress variable. In case of the other variable, since the observed t is smaller than the critical t value (2.32) with 198 degree of freedom at .01 there is no statistically significant differences between the two groups as far as the job interests are concerned.

Table 5 shows the regression analysis through linear combinations of the job stress and job interests variables.

### Table 5
**Regression Analysis Using Linear Combinations of Variables, Job Stress and Job Interests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion variable</th>
<th>Model index</th>
<th>( S )</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Ms</th>
<th>( F )</th>
<th>( R^2 )</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job interests</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>888.1627</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>941.813</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remain</td>
<td>67.19501</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>993.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regression analysis of job interests on the predictor variables of job stress shows the job interests variables may significantly explain the variance related to the job stress so that these variables determine 0.26% of the variance related to the job stress variable.

**Discussion and Conclusion**
The results of data analysis show that there is a relationship between (overall) job stress and job interest (activities, experiences, jobs, and self-assessment) of the employees. To explain this finding, it can be claimed that if we look at the job stress based on individual-environment model, the individual's perception of the job environment and his/her perception of his/her ability to control the job environment determines job stress.
According to this claim, job stress involves perception of the job environmental demands and the individual's perception of his/her inability to control situational demands. In fact it is the individual who, based on the type of mental believes and cognitive appraisals, determines whether an event is stressful or not and determines its effect on him/herself (Huei, 2006).

In fact, when additional job demands are assigned to an employee, job stress is build up and if the employee is under stress for a long time, physical, psychological, or behavioral distress or chronic diseases may appear. Therefore, job stress is a major problem in working places. Job stress is created because of imbalance between situational demands and job control. When situational demands are higher than the responsibilities of an individual, job control decreases and job stress is created.

Every job environment, regardless of job type and circumstances, contains two dimensions of job resources and job demands. When job resources such as physical and psychological energy and organizational facilities are low compared to job demands, the person is not involved in the job and job stress is created (Schaufeli, Nachreiner, & Demerouti, 2003). If job stress is beyond the person’s abilities, high stress is created and the life goals of the person are influenced (Cunningham, 1997 mentioned in Huei, 2006). Job stress occurs when there is an imbalance between the job demands and individual abilities and talents which puts a lot of stress on the individual (Baker & Karazek, 2002; Quotes Kendall, 2003).

Though the shortest and quickest way to diagnose people’ interests in various areas is to ask their opinion about different issues, researchers in psychology have found that answering to direct questions, in most cases, is inconsistent, superficial, and unrealistic (Anastazi, translated by Baraheni, 2003). In industrial societies, unlike traditional societies, individuals’ jobs are not pre-determined. It is the interests, abilities, talents, and needs in different jobs in society that determine the individual’s job in future.
Interest is an important factor in professional development and exploration of the person’s inner tendencies. Therefore, to guarantee psychological health and promote the saying “prevention is better than cure”, selection based on the individual’s ability and interest and guiding people to right directions is an effective undertaking.

There is a relationship between job stress (interpersonal relations, physical condition, and job interest) and job interest of employees. The results of data analysis show that there is a meaningful relationship between the employees’ job stress (interpersonal relations) and their job interests. To explain this finding, it can be claimed that reduction of mental energy is usually the last stage of inappropriate reaction in confrontation with long-term stressful stimuli. Its characteristic is that the person does not have energy to confront with problems (decrease in emotional energy), the person is not able to feel the reality of himself/herself, is not able to receive any help from friends (depersonalization disorder), and feels s/he is worthless (lack of personality accomplishments). These shocking results show that “the academic world” is considered as separate from “the real world” and it is supposed that it is free from stress in a unique way.

Argyle (1989) and Rose (2000) analyzed and compared a broad range of sociological data about 100 professions for ESRC and “Future of work” project and found that teachers are located in a top place in “distress table”. They added that according to the evidence, there is no doubt that educational and health affairs professionals have experienced the highest level of stress in recent years. But professions in these two fields are not the only stressful jobs. Rice (2000) in an investigation on about 2000 English managers found that about half of these people are so tired physically and mentally that can do nothing but to work and sleep, and about one-third admitted that their life on job is not controllable (Doyle, 2003). This report and many other similar reports indicate that any disease
resulted from job stress is not employees’ illusion but it is a real developing social problem.

Job stress can have a number of physical and psychological consequences. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in the US (Johnson, Cart Wright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2005) claims that more than five million workers in the US experience job stress and feel that their jobs generate job stress for them, and the job stress in employees results in diseases such as headache, stomachache, depression, and anxiety (Millward, 2005; Falkum & Valgum, 2005; Teasdal, 2006). In the United States, every day about half a million employees experience job stress at a level which makes them sick. Moreover, about 12.8 million workdays are wasted because of stress. Job stress can result in problems like absenteeism and loss of effectiveness. It has a negative impact on efficiency and organizational effectiveness through poor performance and job leaving (Lu, Siu & Cooper, 2005).

Regarding the hypothesis 3 that there are differences between single and married employees concerning the job stress and job interests variables, data analysis in this part shows that there is no meaningful difference between the two groups regarding these studied variables. It means that both single and married employees feel almost the same level of job stress. However, in both groups there are meaningful relationships between the job stress and job interest as discussed above. On the other hand, there were significant age and experience differences between the males and females employees. Nevertheless, this study shows that the male employees felt a higher level of stress as compared to the female employees and the job interests in females were more than those of male employees.
Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the results of this study, it can be claimed that according to job interests of individuals, people experience lower degrees of stress; therefore, they should pay close attention to this issue before they start a job.

It is recommended that for the future studies a more suitable research instrument should be developed for assessing the job stress in our society which is more in line with our cultural characteristics.

Since the personal differences and individual characteristics are highly influential on job interest and job stress it is suggested that in the future studies a measure that should be done is to control or to study the role of these variables in relation to the job stress and job interests.

Coping skills training both in long-term and short-term can help in the success of people to better cope with job stress and experience less job stress. If they feel that they are in control of their job stress they will face less symptoms of stress compared to others.

References


Carsten, J. (2006). *The 7 hidden reasons employees leave: How to recognize the subtle signs and act before it is too late*; Blackwell Publishing, 246-249.


Elhampour, F., Mehrabizadeh, M., & Shekarshekan, H. (1999). Investigating the relationship between job interests, values, and
attitude of high school and pre-university teachers and their students’ performance. *Journal of Educational Sciences and Psychology.* (Full text in Persian)

Etemadi, S. (2004). *Comparing the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction of nurses in CCU and Normal Heart Hospital, University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.* Master Thesis, University of Alzahra. (Full text in Persian)


Hansen, N., Sverke, M., & Swall, K. (2009). Predicting nurse burnout from demands and resources in three acute care hospitals under


Received: 16 / 7/ 2013
Revised : 18/ 11/ 2014
Accepted: 23 / 11/ 2014